

WHITLAND AVENUE
NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION ZONING
DISTRICT

H A N D B O O K
A N D
D E S I G N
G U I D E L I N E S

METROPOLITAN HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION

Metropolitan Government of
Nashville and Davidson County

Sunnyside in Sevier Park
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Nashville, Tennessee 37204
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WHITLAND AVENUE DESIGN GUIDELINES Adopted:

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Whitland Avenue, like older neighborhoods in over two thousand other towns in the United States, uses neighborhood conservation zoning, a type of historic overlay zoning as a tool to protect its unique architectural character. There are quantifiable reasons for conservation zoning: it gives neighborhoods greater control over development, it can stabilize property values, it decreases the risk of investing in one's house, it promotes heritage tourism, it protects viable urban housing stock, it preserves natural resources by conserving building materials. And there are less quantifiable, but equally important, reasons for conservation zoning -- it protects our past for future generations, it nurtures a sense of community, and it provides a sense of place.

A SHORT HISTORY OF WHITLAND

On June 26, 1793, North Carolina made a grant of 640 acres, which included the present day Whitland neighborhood, to Francis Hodge. In 1797, Hodge sold Joseph Erwin 540 acres for \$2,500. Erwin built what came to be known as Peach Blossom. His daughter Ann (Nancy) married Andrew Hynes; several years later they came into possession of the estate. In 1832, Hynes sold Charles Bosley 201 acres of the property for \$8,070. In 1840 he sold Bosley additional acreage.

Bosely died in 1870 and left nearly all of his estate to his 7-year-old great-granddaughter, Gertrude Bosley Bowling. She married John Leonard Whitworth and eventually gained control of her inheritance. This neighborhood was "Whitworth Farms" at the turn of the 20th century. The Whitworths had two children, Charles and Gertrude. Gertrude married Dr. R. W. Grizzard. With the court's permission, they bought 100 acres of the "Whitworth Home Tract: from the mother's trust for \$100,000; they surveyed, created infrastructure, and began selling Whitworth Realty lots in 1910.

The Whitland neighborhood's period of historic development spans from the early 1910s to the mid-1940s. Architectural styles in the neighborhood include Colonial Revival, Neoclassical, Bungalow, Tudor Revival, English Cottage, American Foursquare and Prairie. These architectural styles represent some of the most popular residential styles of the early twentieth century. The notable Washington Hall, at 3700 Whitland Avenue, is a domed house that is reminiscent of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. The house was built by Judge John Daniels in 1912-14.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION ZONING DISTRICT

The boundaries of the Conservation Zoning District are shown on the map on page 4. Conservation zoning districts are **locally** designated and administered by the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC), an agency of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Conservation zoning is a type of overlay zoning, applying in addition to the base or land-use zoning of an area; *conservation zoning does not impact use*. This type of local designation is different from the National Register of Historic Places, which is a federal designation.

Like the National Register, conservation zoning honors an area's historical significance, but with that recognition, certain exterior work on buildings -- new construction, additions, demolition, and relocation -- is reviewed to ensure that the neighborhood's special character is preserved.

WHAT ARE THE DESIGN GUIDELINES?

The Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC) is the architectural review board that reviews applications for work on properties within the zoning overlay districts. Its nine members, appointed by the mayor, include representatives from zoning districts, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Historical Commission, architect(s) and others. Design review is administered according to a set of design guidelines. The guidelines are criteria and standards, developed jointly by the MHZC and the Whitland Avenue neighbors, which are used in determining the architectural compatibility of proposed projects. The guidelines provide direction for project applicants and ensure that the decisions of the MHZC are not arbitrary or based on anyone's personal taste. The guidelines protect the neighborhood from new construction or additions not in character with the neighborhood and from the loss of architecturally or historically important buildings.

By state and local legislation, design guidelines for neighborhood conservation zoning districts must be in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* -- criteria developed by the National Park Service and used by private and public preservation organizations throughout the country. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* consist of 10 principles, which are listed below:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal changes to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historical significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where

possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means necessary.

8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future. The essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

GETTING APPROVAL FOR YOUR PROJECT

If you are planning to

- **BUILD** a new structure,
- **ADD** to an existing building (increase the footprint, height or structure envelope when visible from the street)
- **DEMOLISH** a structure in whole or in part, or
- **RELOCATE** a structure,

one step is added to getting approval for the work: **you must first obtain a Preservation Permit from the MHZC.**

1. Call the MHZC at 862-7970 to confirm whether or not the MHZC needs to review your project; and if so, to make an appointment to meet with the staff.

The staff will meet with you, your contractor or architect at your house to discuss the project, answer any questions, and advise you on whether the plans meet the design guidelines. The staff can assist in making your plans meet the guidelines and can offer design suggestions.

In order for the MHZC to determine whether a proposed project complies with the design guidelines, all applications must be accompanied by complete site plans, elevation drawings, specifications and any other appropriate information. When you submit these materials, the staff will determine whether a Preservation Permit can be issued immediately or if the work requires referral to the full Commission. Regular meetings of the Commission are scheduled for the third Wednesday of every month. If a complete application is received more than fifteen working days prior to a scheduled meeting, a special meeting can be called. The MHZC staff will issue a Preservation Permit upon approval of the application by the Commission.

2. Take the Preservation Permit to the Metropolitan Department of Codes Administration.

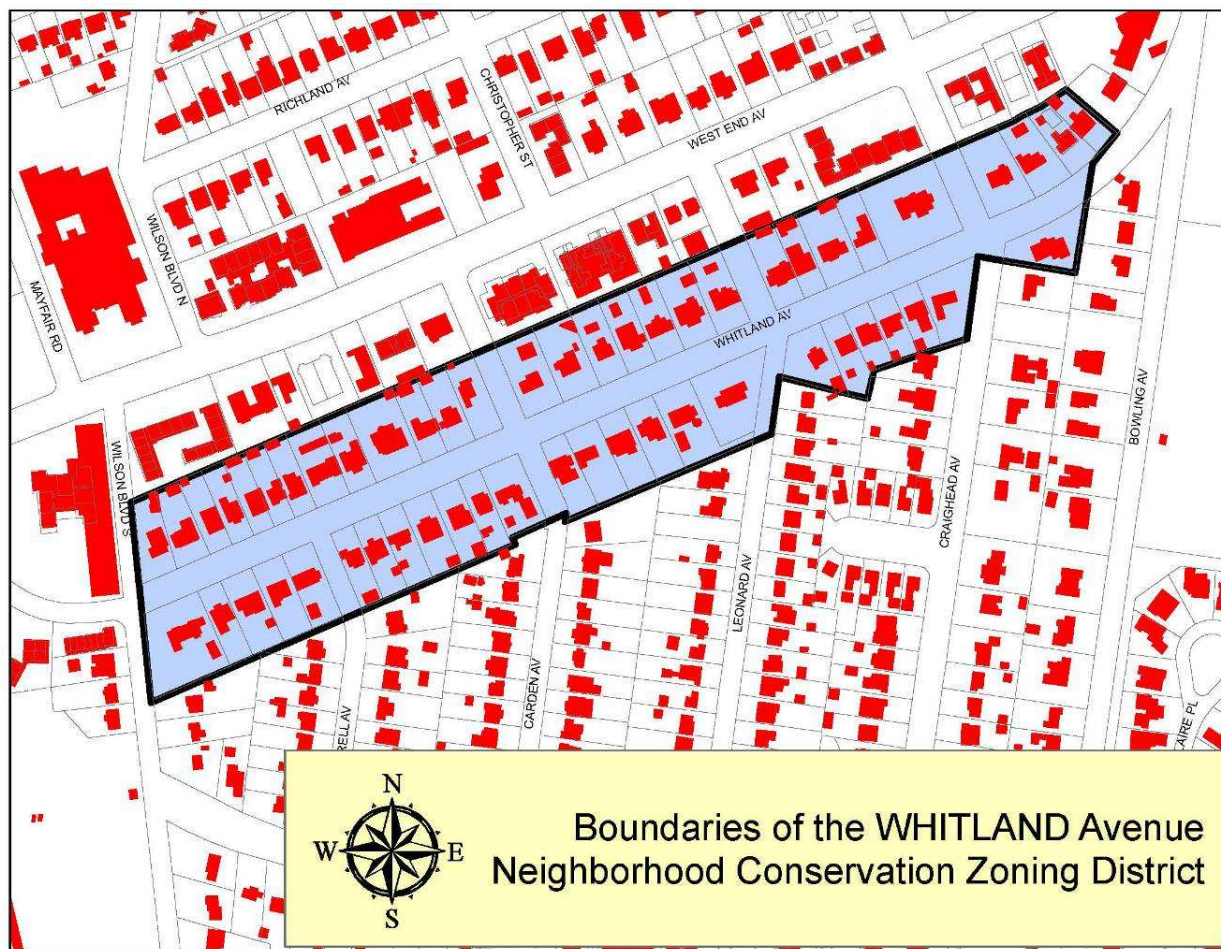
Officials at Codes will review your plans for compliance with regular zoning and building code regulations -- applicable whether or not your property is in a conservation zoning district. Permit fees (amount charged depends on the type and value of the work done) will be charged to you then. The Codes Department is located on the third floor of the Metro Office Building, 800 2nd Avenue South. For permits to remain valid, work must begin within six months of the date of issue.

NOTE: Subject work done without a preservation permit is in violation of the Historic Zoning Regulations established under Chapter 17.36, Historic District and Landmarks, of the Code of Laws of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Like the Building Code, the Whitland Design Guidelines are a legal document. Work done without prior review and approval by the MHZC is subject to fines and other penalties. Appeals to decisions of the Historic Zoning Commission staff can be made to the Commission; appeals to decisions of the Commission can be taken to a court of competent jurisdiction as provided for by law.

AVAILABLE DESIGN ASSISTANCE

The MHZC staff is available to meet property owners on site to discuss a restoration, renovation, or new construction projects. In addition to discussing the requirements of the Whitland Avenue Design Guidelines and options for meeting the needs of property owners, the staff may also provide information and ideas not related to the neighborhood conservation district requirements. These may include resolving maintenance problems, stylistic options, historically appropriate paint color (paint colors are not regulated), or other issues.

MHZC maintains a library of materials on historic architecture and restoration technology, and files on preservation products and services, which are available to the public. Call for more information.



PART 2: THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Italicized sections of the guidelines contain interpretive information that is meant to make the guidelines easier to understand; they are not part of the guidelines themselves. Illustrations are intended only to provide example buildings and circumstances. It is important to remember that every building is different and what may be appropriate for one house may not be appropriate for another.

Note: Within this section of the zoning ordinance, “historic zoning” is used as the general term for Nashville’s three types of overlay districts applicable to historic properties: Historic Preservation, Neighborhood Conservation, and Historic Landmark. The references to historic zoning in the ordinance language below are to be understood as Neighborhood Conservation Zoning, or conservation zoning.

I. PURPOSE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

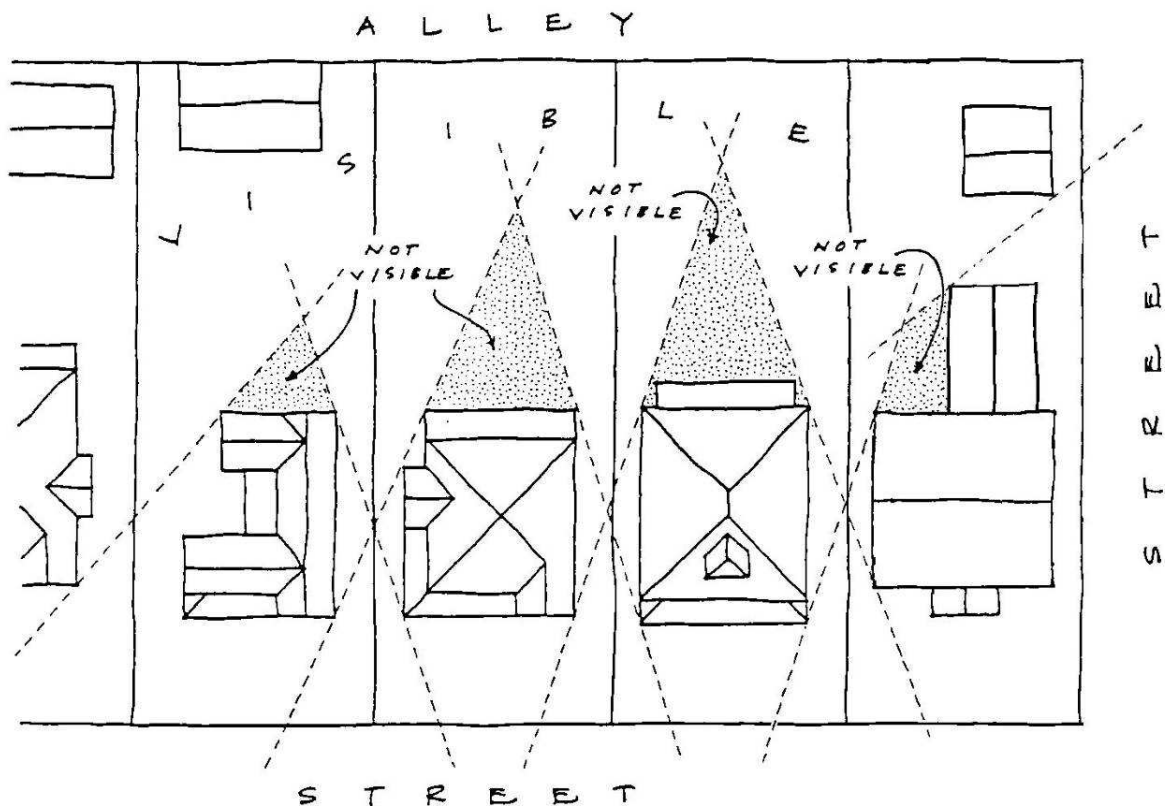
- A. Design guidelines are criteria and standards which the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission must consider in determining the appropriateness of proposed work within a neighborhood conservation zoning district. Appropriateness of work must be determined in order to accomplish the goals of neighborhood conservation zoning, as outlined in Article III. Historic Overlay Districts, Section 17.36.100; Metropolitan Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance:
1. To preserve and protect the historical and/or architectural value of buildings or other structures;
 2. To regulate exterior design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used within the historic district to ensure compatibility;
 3. To create an aesthetic appearance that complements the historic buildings or other structures;
 4. To foster civic beauty;
 5. To strengthen the local economy; and
 6. To promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the present and future citizens of Nashville and Davidson County.

II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

A. PRINCIPLES

1. These guidelines shall apply only to the exteriors of buildings and to portions of proposed structures that would be visible from public rights-of-way or streets.

For the purposes of conservation zoning, alleys are not considered to be public rights-of-way. Areas shown shaded in the diagram below, which are not visible from public streets, are NOT subject to MHZC review. Additionally, new, portable storage buildings fewer than 100 square feet in area are not subject to MHZC review. [Also see the additions illustration on page 13.]



2. The public facades -- front- and street-related sides -- of proposals for new buildings shall be more carefully reviewed than other facades.
3. New buildings should not imitate past architectural styles; they should reflect the era of their own construction through the use of modern materials. For an exception to this principle, see number 4.

This principle precludes the "theme park effect." Fake old buildings are not appropriate. New buildings inspired by historic styles, but identifiable as new construction, can be appropriate.

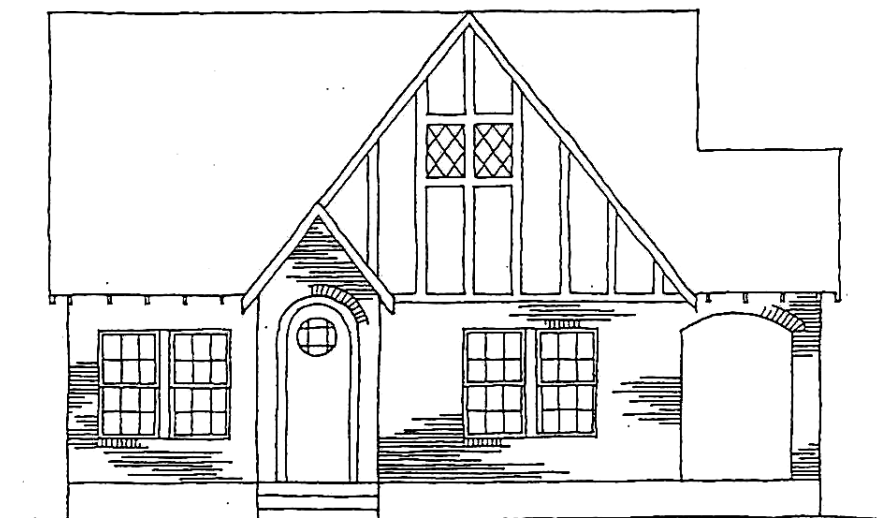
II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

A. PRINCIPLES *continued*

4. Reconstruction may be appropriate when it accurately reproduces a no-longer existing building on its original site, if the building: (1) would have contributed to the historic and architectural character of the area; (2) will be compatible in terms of style, height, scale, massing, and materials with the buildings immediately surrounding it; and (3) is accurately based on documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
5. Continuous construction in the Whitland Avenue neighborhood during the early 20th century resulted in a variety of building types and styles that illustrate the evolution of architectural styles and technology over the years. New buildings should continue this tradition while complementing and being visually compatible with surrounding historic buildings.



BUNGALOW



TUDOR REVIVAL

II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

A. PRINCIPLES *continued*



6. New construction should respect, and not disrupt, the established pattern and rhythm of existing historic buildings on the same and opposite sides of a street.
7. Development of the Whitland Avenue neighborhood began in 1910 and continued through the first half of the 20th century. Its period of significance for historic development runs from 1910 to 1945. Homes built after 1945 or which have been significantly altered by additions or renovations may be considered non-historic and may not contribute to the significance of the district. Non-contributing structures can be renovated with additions or replaced with new construction in accordance with the Design Guidelines.

II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

B. GUIDELINES

1. *New Construction*

See illustration on page 11

a. Height

The height of the foundation wall, porch roof(s), and main roof(s) of a new building shall be compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with those of surrounding historic buildings.

b. Scale

The size of a new building and its mass in relation to open spaces shall be compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with surrounding historic buildings.

c. Setback and Rhythm of Spacing

The setback from front and side yard property lines established by adjacent historic buildings should be maintained. Generally, a dominant rhythm along a street is established by uniform lot and building width. Infill buildings should maintain that rhythm.

d. Materials, Texture, and Details, and Material Color

The materials, texture, and details, and material color of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with surrounding historic buildings. Vinyl and aluminum siding are not appropriate. MHZC does not review the painting of structures.

T-1-11- type building panels, "permastone", E.I.F.S., and other artificial siding materials are generally not appropriate. However, cement fiberboard siding is an approvable siding material for new construction, but when used as lapped siding it should be smooth and not stamped or embossed to emulate wood grain.

e. Roofs

The roof(s) of a new building shall be visually compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with the roof shape, orientation, and pitch of surrounding historic buildings. With the exception of chimneys, roof-top equipment and roof penetrations shall be located so as to minimize their visibility from the street.

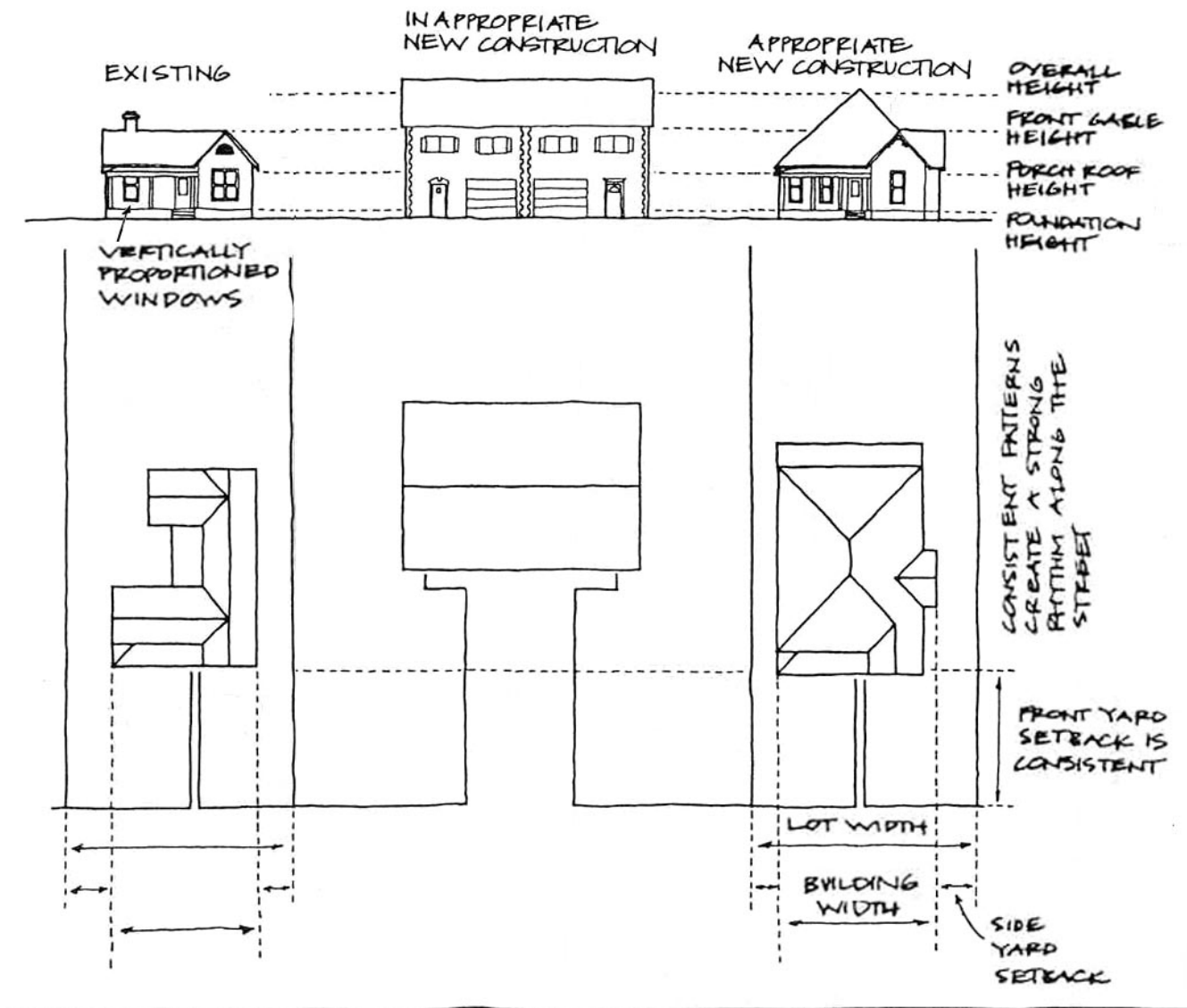
f. Orientation

The orientation of a new building's front facade shall be visually consistent with surrounding historic buildings.

II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

B. GUIDELINES

1. *New Construction continued*



g. Proportion and Rhythm of Openings

The relationship of width to height of windows and doors, and the rhythm of solids (walls) to voids (door and window openings) in a new building shall be compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with surrounding historic buildings.

h. Utilities

Utility connections such as gas meters, electric meters, phone, cable, and HVAC condenser units should be located so as to minimize their visibility from the street.

II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

B. GUIDELINES Continued

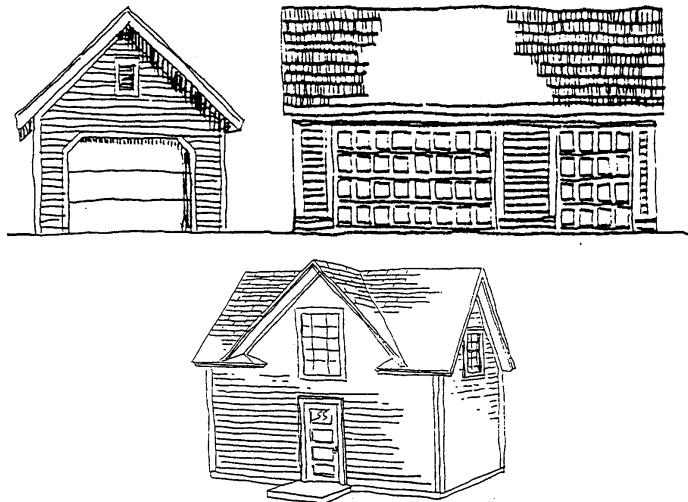
1. *New Construction continued*

i. Outbuildings

1) A new garage or storage building should reflect the character of the period of the house to which the outbuilding will be related. The outbuilding should be compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with surrounding historic outbuildings in terms of height, scale, roof shape, materials, texture, and details.

Historically, outbuildings were either very utilitarian in character, or (particularly with more extravagant houses) they repeated the roof forms and architectural details of the houses to which they related. Generally, either approach is appropriate for new outbuildings. Brick, weatherboard, wood shingles, and board - and -batten are typical siding materials. Outbuildings with weatherboard siding typically have mitered corners or wide cornerboards and window and door casings (trim). Generally, the minimum roof pitch appropriate for outbuildings is 12:4. Decorative raised panels on publicly visible garage doors are generally not appropriate. Publicly visible pedestrian doors must either be appropriate for the style of house to which the outbuilding relates or be flat with no panels. Publicly visible windows should be appropriate to the style of the house.

2) Outbuildings should be situated on a lot as is historically typical for surrounding historic buildings.



j. Public Spaces

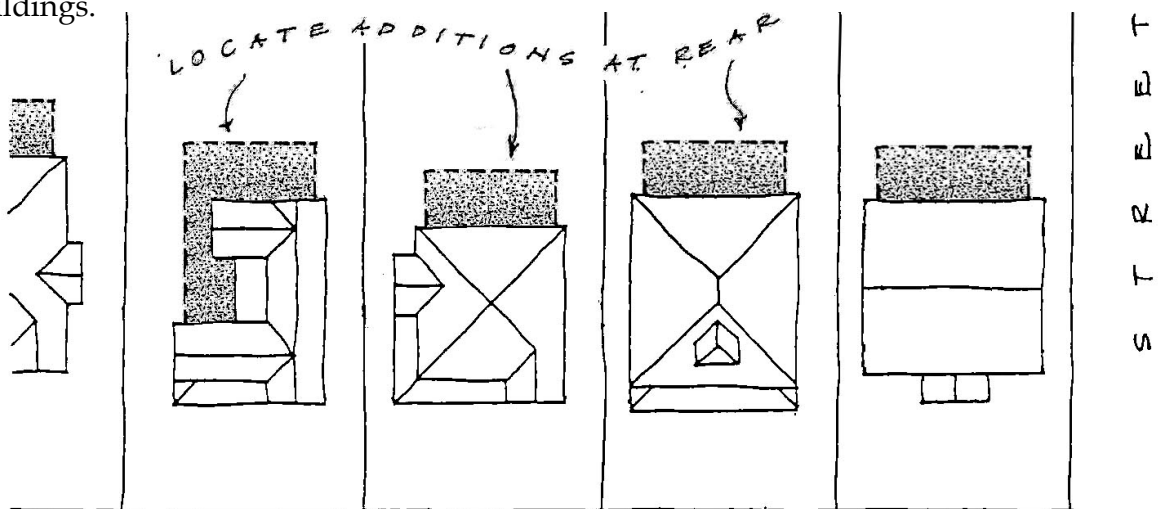
Landscaping, sidewalks, signage, lighting, street furniture and other work undertaken in public spaces by any individual, group or agency shall be presented to the MHZC for review of compatibility with the character of the district.

II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

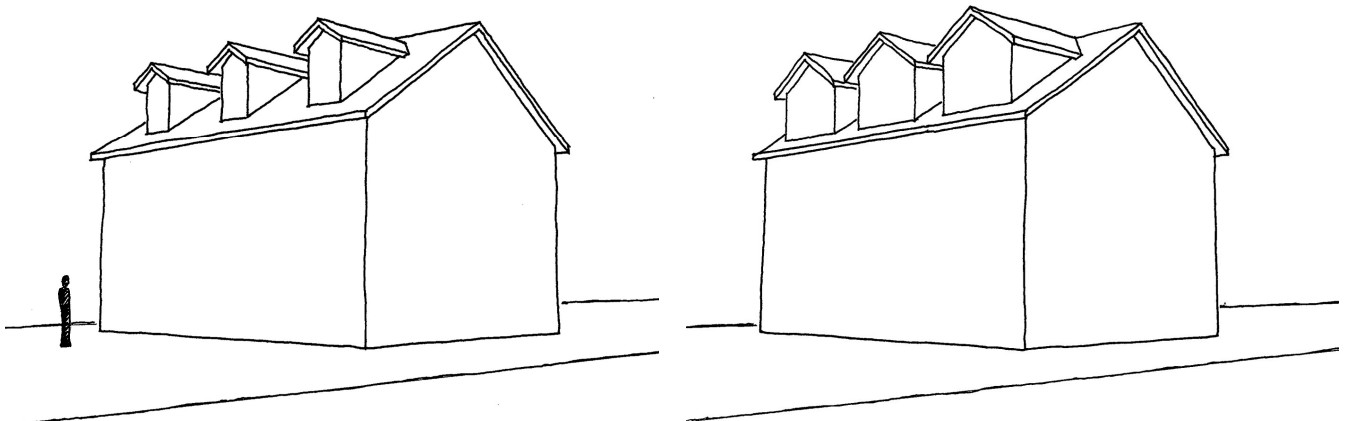
B. GUIDELINES Continued

2. Additions

a. Generally, an addition should be situated at the rear of a building in such a way that it will not disturb either front or side facades. To distinguish between the historic structure and an addition, it is desirable to set the addition in from the building side wall or for the addition to have a different exterior cladding. Additions not normally recommended on historic structures may be appropriate for non-historic structures. Front or side alterations to non-historic structures that increase space or change exterior height should be compatible by not contrasting greatly with adjacent historic buildings.



Front dormers are an original characteristic of many contributing houses in the district. It may be appropriate to add a front dormer(s) when they are in character with the primary structure's design, subordinate to the overall roof mass, in scale with dormers on similar style historic structures, located below the ridge line of the primary structure, and, when the number and size of dormers does not visually overwhelm the scale of the primary structure.



Appropriate Colonial Revival style dormers are typically symmetric, set back from the facade, set down from the ridge, and only slightly wider than a typical window

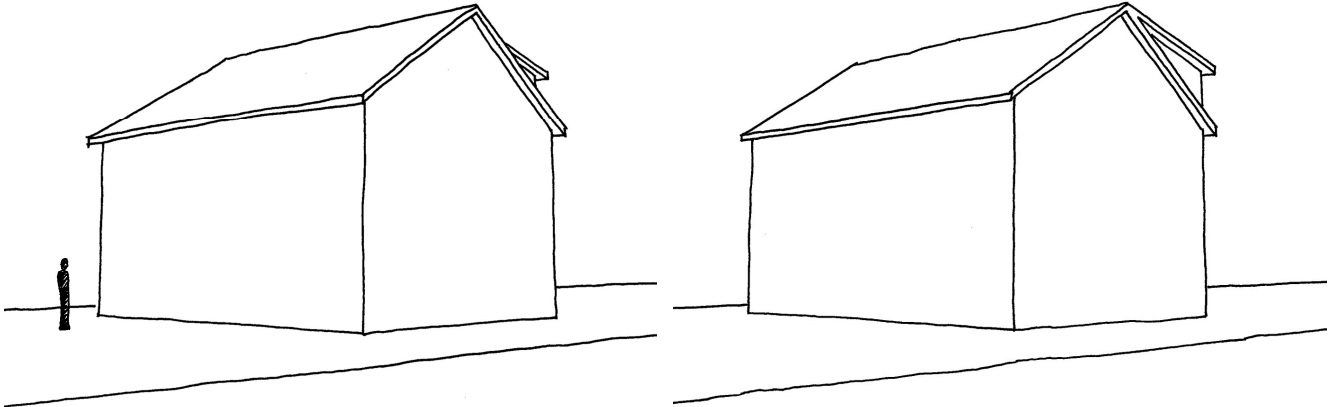
Inappropriate front dormers can become the dominant feature of a historic house and significantly alter its perceived massing

II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

B. GUIDELINES Continued

2. *Additions continued*

Capturing attic space through the addition of a rear shed dormer can be appropriate if the dormer walls are set in from the existing house.



Appropriate rear dormers are set in from the side wall of the existing house at least two feet, creating a division between new and old

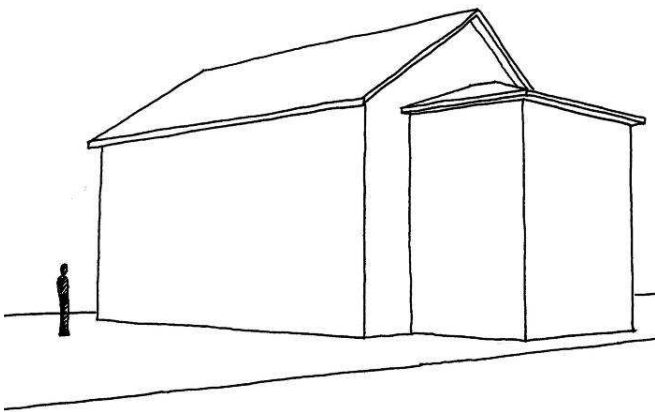
Inappropriate rear dormers have no inset; they visually and physically alter the roof structure of the existing house

For historic one-story houses with simple, side-gable roofs and minimal attic headroom (<8'), a "ridge raise" type additions may be appropriate; in these types of additions, the front roof plane of the main structure is extended towards the rear of the lot, gaining up to two vertical feet in height. As with rear shed dormer additions, these, "ridge raise," additions should set in from the side wall of the existing house at least 24".

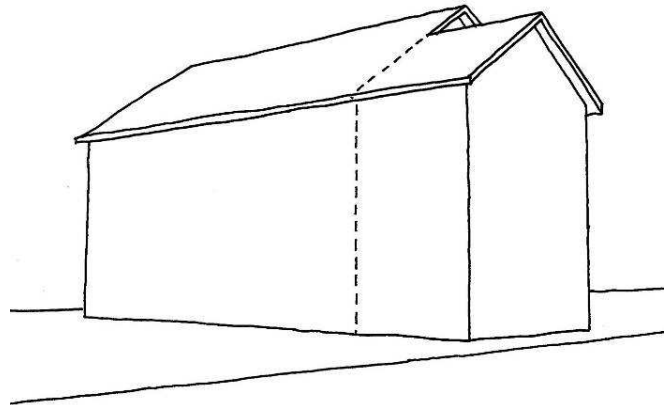
Illustration to be added

b. When a lot width exceeds 60 feet or the standard lot width on the block, it may be appropriate to add a side addition to a historic structure. The addition should set back from the face of the historic structure and should be subservient in height, width and massing to the historic structure.

One and two-story side porches are a characteristic of many Colonial Revival style houses in the district. It may be appropriate to add a one- or two-story side porch addition, if it is subordinate to the historic structure in height, set back from the face of the main house, and does not replace a historic side addition.



Appropriate side additions are set back from the facade and set down from the ridge of the existing house



Inappropriate side additions do not set back from the front of the house and alter the structure's facade

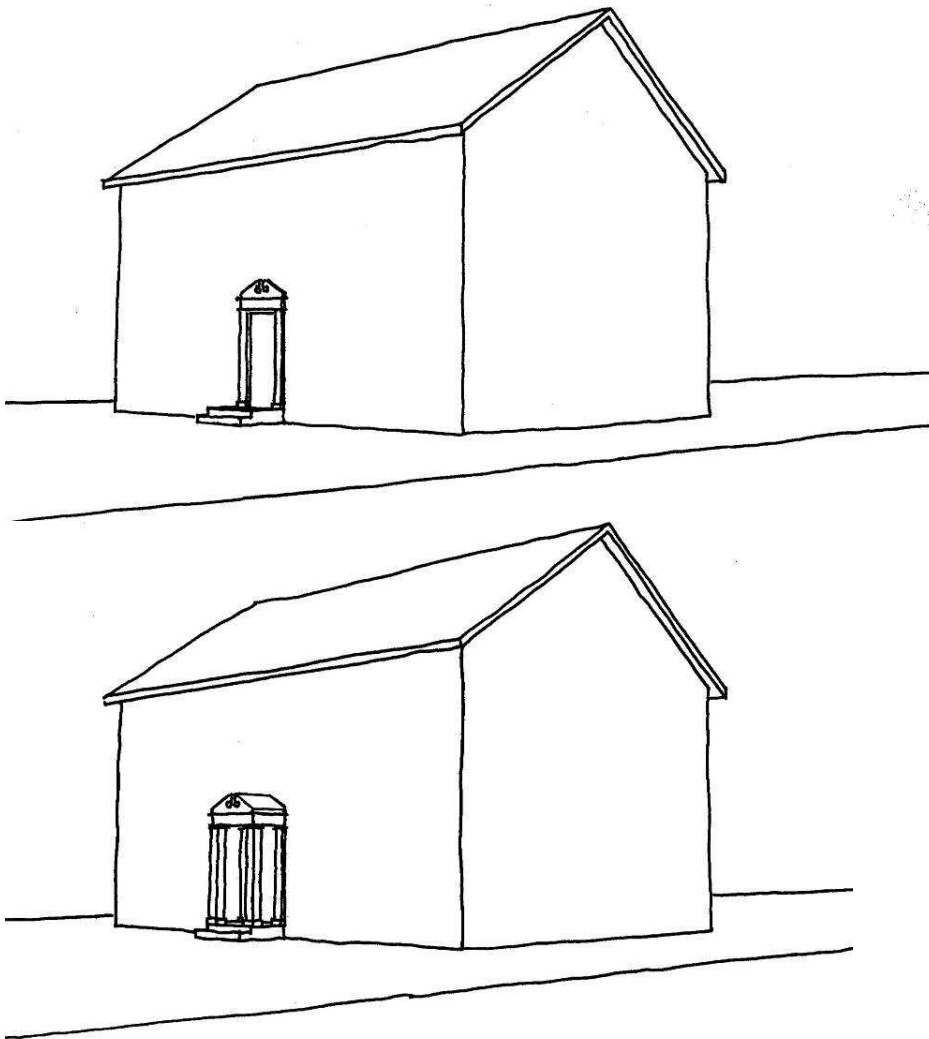
c. The creation of an addition through enclosure of a front porch is not appropriate. The creation of an addition through the enclosure of a side porch may be appropriate if the addition is constructed in such a way that the original form and openings on the porch remain visible and undisturbed.

II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

B. GUIDELINES Continued

2. *Additions continued*

- c. The creation of an addition through enclosure of a front porch is not appropriate. The creation of an addition through the enclosure of a side porch may be appropriate if the addition is constructed in such a way that the original form and openings on the porch remain visible and undisturbed.



Front porticos are typical of many Colonial Revival style houses in the district. Where they do not already exist, it may be appropriate to create a portico up to three feet in depth when the original pediment is duplicated at the face of the portico; the entranceway surround remains intact; and new columns and portico structure are compatible to the character of the house and historic examples in the district.

- d. Contemporary designs for additions to existing properties are not discouraged when such additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material; and when such design is compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with the size, scale, material color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.
- e. A new addition should be constructed in such a manner that if the addition were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original structure would be unimpaired.
- f. Additions should follow the guidelines for new construction.

III. DEMOLITION

A. PRINCIPLE

The demolition of a building, or major portion of a building, which contributes historically or architecturally to the character and significance of the district is not appropriate and should be avoided.

B. GUIDELINES

1. Demolition is not appropriate

- a. if a building, or major portion of a building, is of such architectural or historical interest and value that its removal would be detrimental to the public interest; or
 - b. if a building, or major portion of a building, is of such old or unusual or uncommon design and materials that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced without great difficulty and expense.
-

2. Demolition is appropriate

- a. if a building, or major portion of a building, has irretrievably lost its architectural and historical integrity and significance and its removal will result in a more historically appropriate visual effect on the district;
- b. if a building, or major portion of a building, does not contribute to the historical and architectural character and significance of the district and its removal will result in a more historically appropriate visual effect on the district; or

Generally, non-historic (non-contributing) structures may be demolished for new construction that will have a more historically appropriate effect on the district.

- c. if the denial of the demolition will result in an economic hardship on the applicant as determined by the MHZC in accordance with section 17.40.420 (Historic Zoning Regulations), Metropolitan Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.

IV. RELOCATION

A. PRINCIPLES

1. Moving a historic building from its original site should be avoided.
2. Moving a non-historic building, or a building which has irretrievably lost its architectural and historical integrity, may be appropriate.

B. GUIDELINES

1. Moving a building into the district is appropriate if the building will be compatible with the historic buildings surrounding the new location in terms of height, scale, setback and rhythm of spacing, materials, texture, details, material color, roof shape, orientation, and proportion and rhythm of openings.
2. Moving a building out of the district is not appropriate unless:
 - a. the building does not contribute to the district's historical and architectural significance, or has irretrievably lost its architectural and historical integrity; or
 - b. the building is historic, but the loss of its architectural and historical integrity in its original location is certain.
3. Moving a building from one location to another within the district is not appropriate unless:
 - a. the building will be compatible with the historic buildings surrounding the new location in terms of height, scale, setback and rhythm of spacing, materials, texture, details, material color, roof shape, orientation, and proportion and rhythm of openings; and
 - b. if historic, the loss of its architectural and historical integrity in its original location is certain.

V. DEFINITIONS

Addition: *New construction that increases the footprint, height, or building envelope of an existing structure.*

Appropriate: *Suitable for, or compatible with, a property or district, based on accepted standard and techniques for historic preservation.*

Certificate of Appropriateness: *See Preservation Permit.*

Demolition: *The tearing down of a building in whole or in part.*

Elevation: *A scaled drawing that illustrates the view of a side of a building.*

Facade: *An exterior side of a building.*

Economic Hardship: *A condition that warrants the demolition of a contributing structure where the cost of a structure plus the cost of repairs to the structure making it habitable are greater than the market value of the structure. Economic hardship may be caused by, but not limited to structural damage, termite damage, and fire damage. This exception shall not apply to any homeowner who creates a hardship condition or situation as a consequence of their own neglect or negligence. Refer to Section 17.40.420 D of the Metro Code of Nashville and Davidson County.*

Historic: *A structure or site, usually constructed by 1945 or earlier, which possesses historical or architectural significance, based on the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*

New Construction: *Any freestanding structure on a lot constructed after the designation of the neighborhood conservation zoning district.*

Non-Historic: *A structure or site, usually constructed post 1945, which does not possess historical or architectural significance, based on the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*

Orientation: *The directional expression of the front facade of a building, i.e., facing the street, facing north.*

Period of Significance: *The time frame in which a neighborhood developed or was platted into building lots and substantially built out with structures, based on the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*

Preservation Permit: *A legal document issued by the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission confirming review and approval of work to be done on property within the boundaries of an historic or conservation zoning district. A preservation permit is required before getting a building permit. Previously called Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Public Right of Way: Publicly owned and maintained streets and walkways. For the purposes of conservation zoning, alleys are not considered public rights-of-way.

Public Space: Any area that is either owned, leased or for which there is held an easement by a governmental entity, or an area that is required to be open to the public.

Reconstruction: Construction of an accurate replica of a historic building or portion thereof, based on physical, pictorial or documentary evidence.

Relocation: The moving of a building from one site to another.

Shall: What must happen.

Should: What must happen unless circumstances illustrate why an alternative is more appropriate.